



Oldbury Wells School

Member of the Trusted Schools Alliance

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(includes Prevent Duty)

September 2024

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RATIFIED BY:	OWS Local Governing Body
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	Autumn Term 2025 <i>(unless there is a material change)</i>
AUTHOR:	Designated Safeguarding Lead

Policy Scope and Aims

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Oldbury Wells School including senior managers and the board of trustees/governing body, staff, volunteers, contractors, agency staff and students.

The policy is publicly available on the school website so that it can be accessible for our children; their families and anyone visiting and /or working with us.

The policy aims to meet the requirements as outlined in Part 2 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (page 27).

Safeguarding Statement

The following policy is written to show how Oldbury Wells School responds to safeguarding/ child protection issues by assuming the student is living in Shropshire. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is also familiar with the need to modify referrals, where the student lives in Wolverhampton or Staffordshire.

At Oldbury Wells we believe that:

- All children have the right to protection from all types of abuse.
- Everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.

This means that we will:

- Not tolerate the abuse of children. This includes never accepting and always challenging or raising concerns about words or actions which downplay, justify, or promote abuse. This applies to anyone who is part of, comes into or works with our school.
- Be child centred and ensure that we consider the best interests of children in everything that we do.
- Ensure we provide a safe environment for children to learn, grow and develop and feel able to raise any concerns they may have for themselves or others.
- Look out for and respond promptly and appropriately to all identified concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child.
- Ensure no child or group of children are treated less favourably by us than others.
- Be aware of and take extra positive actions that may be needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child(ren) who we know are more vulnerable to experiencing abuse or discrimination.
- Work in partnership with our children, their parents, carers, and other agencies.

Key Terms

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the specific activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

There are a number of types of abuse and safeguarding issues that could increase the risk that a child could be abused. These are further defined and explained in Part 1, Part 5 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent in either a paid or voluntary capacity. The exception to this term is Governors/Trustees.

Governors/Trustees refers to those who are part of the School's Governing Body. This includes individuals who are at Trust or Charity governing body level as well as part of local school governance bodies.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

A **Parent** refers to birth parents and others who have parental responsibility (as defined by the Children's Act 1989) or has care of a child.¹

Legislation, Standards and Guidance

This policy is also based on the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as; protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Section 3 (5) of the Children Act 1989 states that the law empowers anyone who has care of a child to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard his/her welfare.

- KCSIE 2024
- [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Threshold Guidance](#)
- [West Midlands Child Protection Procedures](#)

- Human Rights Act 1998 – it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) that apply in the UK
- Equality Act 2010: Compliance with the Public-Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal requirement for schools and colleges that are public bodies. Schools and colleges that are public bodies have a general duty to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and to foster good relations between different groups. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications such as, for example, the elimination of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as required by s149 of the Equality Act) applies to our school and we refer to the [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 – preventing people being drawn into terrorism and promotion of British values to ensure children are kept safe from radicalisation
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 – Serious Crime Act 2015 - mandatory reporting of FGM from 31st October 2015 including the [Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information](#)
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children Act 2021)
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- [Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

Linked Policies

This policy and procedure will also link to other school policies:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- E-safety/ICT Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The DSL who will take the lead for safeguarding and child protection issues is Mrs Rebecca Lawson and who is supported by the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer – Ms Sarah Barlow.

The Deputy DSL is Mr Tom Williams.

The safeguarding link governor, who oversees this work, is Andrew Oliver.

We follow the statutory guidance as set out in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (and associated documents and guidance); adhering to the roles and responsibilities and expectations identified for:

The Governing Body/Proprietors/Management Committee:

Have a strategic leadership responsibility for ensuring we take a whole school approach to safeguarding arrangements as outlined in this policy and that we comply with our duties under [Legislation and Guidance](#). Part 2 Keeping Children Safe in Education outlines their key responsibilities.

The Safeguarding Governor/Trustee is responsible for leading on the governance oversight of safeguarding arrangements; regularly meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and reporting back to the Governing Body Proprietors/Management Committee.

The Chair of the Governing Body/Proprietors/Management Committee will liaise with the Local Authority in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher in line with [Ensuring safe staff](#).

All Governors/Trustees will ensure:

- The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead who has the appropriate status and authority to carry out duties of the post and is provided with the time, funding, resources, and support needed to carry out their role effectively.
- The school has safeguarding policies and procedures in place (as outlined in Part 2 Keeping Children Safe in Education) that are implemented effectively and comply with our duties under [Legislation, Standards and Guidance](#) at all times.
- All staff and governors are knowledgeable and confident in carrying out their safeguarding duties in line with [Professional development and support](#).
- That the effectiveness and implementation of safeguarding arrangements are robustly overseen by the Governing Body/Proprietor/Management Committee

The Headteacher:

Is responsible (with the lead support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) for ensuring safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively in school.

This includes:

- Having the overarching responsibility of ensuring the effectiveness of our school safeguarding arrangements as outlined in this policy.
- Being accountable and reporting to the Governing Body (with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) on the effectiveness of school safeguarding arrangements.
- Supporting and promoting a whole school safeguarding culture and ethos as outlined in our [Safeguarding Statement](#). This includes ensuring that the Senior Leadership Team work effectively together and with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding.
- Take the lead role in [Ensuring Safe Practice](#); including ensuring staff and knowledgeable and confident in their safeguarding practice. The Headteacher is also the lead person responsible for receiving, managing, and referring to/liasing with the Local Authority Designated Officer (with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) or any other

authorities regarding allegations of abuse made against staff or other organisations/individual who use school premises.

- Enabling the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputy(ies) to carry out their roles effectively. This means ensuring they are given sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary.
- Ensuring that all school policies including safeguarding policies and procedures and those required to be in place, are implemented and followed by all staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in our school. Annex C Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 outlines their key responsibilities. Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (hereafter referred to as DDSL) support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the school has a child protection policy is in place as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education, that is implemented and followed by all staff.
- Being available to deal with safeguarding and child protection during school hours. Out of school hours the DSL or Deputy DSL will always be available. Any concern that arises at the weekend or during the holidays can be reported through the general school email address which is monitored regularly.
- Acting as the point of contact with whom to raise safeguarding concerns within (including those raised by the school filtering and monitoring system) and to our school.
- Supporting the Headteacher to [Ensure Safe Practice](#) in school.
- Managing safeguarding referrals to the Local Authority; Police and any other statutory authorities or multi-agency risk management arrangements (see [Designated Safeguarding Lead Response](#)).
- Working closely with the Governing Body, Headteacher and relevant senior leadership team members to ensure a whole school safeguarding culture and ethos as outlined in our [Safeguarding Statement](#) and the implementation of effective safeguarding arrangements, as outlined in this policy.
- Acting as the point of contact to and proactively engaging with the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership arrangements as outlined in [Working in Partnership](#).
- Ensuring children and parents are aware of how and encouraged to raise safeguarding concerns and how they will be responded to as outlined in [Working in Partnership](#).
- Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise to all staff; including ensuring that there is ongoing promotion and awareness of safeguarding and children protection in school.
- Ensuring the effective management and oversight of safeguarding information as outlined in [Record Keeping and Information Security](#).
- Maintaining and access [Professional development and support](#).

All staff (including students and volunteers):

Are expected to work in line with our [Safeguarding Statement](#) and adhere to the policies, processes and systems that support safeguarding as outlined in this policy. This specifically includes:

- Read KCSIE 2024 Part 1, Part 5 and Annex
- Accessing and maintaining [Professional development and support](#) to ensure they remain knowledgeable and confident in their safeguarding practice.

- Recognise, Respond and Report [Staff Safeguarding Concerns](#)
- Engaging in [Safe Practice](#). This includes raising concerns (however small) about individual behaviour or practices or cultures in schools that compromise the safety of children as outlined in [Ensuring safe staff](#).
- [Teaching our children how to keep safe](#)

Professional Development and Support

To ensure all our staff and governors are knowledgeable and confident in keeping children safe in our school; they will complete the professional development activities as outlined below. We monitor professional development activities and maintain a central professional development record.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) provide all staff with ongoing safeguarding support, advice, and expertise. Staff safeguarding knowledge and competence is overseen as part of the staff induction, appraisal, and performance processes in school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy(ies)) receive regular support and supervision from their line managers in their regular meetings.

All Staff (including volunteers)

Activity	Frequency
Receive information on school safeguarding arrangements and procedures as outlined in KCSiE 2024 (Part 1)	Induction or when arrangements/procedures are updated.
Read Keeping children safe in education 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk) (KCSiE): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Staff: Part 1; Part 5 and Annex B. • Senior Leadership Team: Entire document • Staff who do not work directly with children: Annex A 	Induction then annually (in Autumn Term) or when updated.
Complete Safeguarding Awareness Training to enable staff to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding (including online safety and child-on-child abuse) concerns	Induction and then every 3 years
Complete Prevent Awareness Training appropriate to role	Induction and every 2 years.
Complete Cyber Security Training	Induction and then annually
Receive regular national and local safeguarding updates (including those relating to online safety).	As required and at least annually. Staff to receive regular safeguarding information and training in staff spotlight briefings

Designated Safeguarding Leads (including any deputies)

Activity (in addition to all staff above)	Frequency
Complete Schools Designated Safeguarding Lead Training to a standard as outlined in KCSiE Annex C	On induction in role and then every 2 years

Read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.	Induction into role then annually (in Autumn Term) or when updated.
Maintain knowledge and development relating to the role of DSL	As required, but at least annually

All Governors

Activity	Frequency
Complete Governor Safeguarding Training to equip them with the knowledge to carry out their strategic Roles and Responsibilities .	Induction and then every 3 years.
Read Keeping Children Safe in Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Governors: Part 1; Part 2 and Annex B. • Chair & Safeguarding Link Governors: Entire document 	Induction into role then annually (in Autumn Term) or when updated).
Complete Cyber Security Training	Induction and then annually
Complete Prevent Awareness Training appropriate to role	Induction and every 2 years.

Staff/Governors involved in recruitment of staff (including administration)

Activity (in addition to other relevant above)	Frequency
Read Part 3: Keeping Children Safe in Education	Induction into role then annually (in Autumn Term) or when updated.
Complete appropriate safer recruitment training (that is in alignment with Part 3 KCSiE)	Induction and every 3 years (or when KCSiE Part 3 is updated)

Ensuring Safe Practice

Safer Recruitment

We adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities in our setting. We ensure at least one member of a selection panel is safer recruitment trained; as outlined in [Professional development and support](#). Our recruitment procedures are in alignment with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024: Part 3.

As part of our recruitment and selection processes; we ensure that our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is evident to candidates throughout each stage of the process; with any candidate who is not suitable to work with children being deterred and identified at the earliest point. These procedures are included in the application information for candidates. We also ensure that all applicants complete a robust application form. We seek suitable references and carry out online social media checks prior to interview and make shortlisted candidates aware of these checks; as well as ensure that there is a focus on the candidate's knowledge and competency in safeguarding practice as part of the interview processes.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024: Part 3; we maintain a record of information we have received to confirm the necessary pre-appointment safer recruitment

checks are completed on staff (including volunteers, supply staff and students); Governors/Trustees; [contractors](#); and [visitors](#) who attend our school in a professional capacity. We complete the checks on staff, volunteers, and Governors/Trustees who we recruit ourselves. For those who are recruited by others; we ensure that we receive written confirmation of the relevant checks completed and check their identification before they are allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity with children.

Where we do not have all the necessary information or there are gaps in the information; we have robust risk assessment processes in place. For anyone who does not meet the required standards of pre-appointment checks or suitability, the risk assessment will determine if they are allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity with children. We reserve the right to refuse access to the school site to any person who we are not assured is safe to work or engage in regulated activity with children.

On appointment; staff (including volunteers) receive a robust induction programme which provides them with the relevant safeguarding knowledge but also clarity on the expected standards of behaviour within and outside of school.

If any safeguarding concerns of allegations arise relating to a member of staff, Governor/Trustee or other person working on our school premises; staff are expected to act in line with [Ensuring safe staff](#) and [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#).

Contractors

We have several contracts with external providers to work in our school including with children. Contractors who have a contract with the school for example, Catering and Cleaning providers receive Safeguarding training from the school, as part of the whole-school Safeguarding and KCSIE training. Companies who visit school to carry out authorised contracted work including building contractors, undergo Enhanced DBS checks. All contractors on site, who work unsupervised or work directly with children have Enhanced DBS informed recorded on the school Single Central Register (SCR). Any contractor on site without an Enhanced DBS, is accompanied at all times by a member of staff.

Visitors

For all school visitors, procedures are in place for checking and recording details and confirming the identity of visitors, including prospective candidates. All visitors are required to sign in and out of school at the school reception; and we ensure that we have control over who comes into the premises so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to children.

Any school visitor who has an Enhanced DBS, is recorded on the school's Single Central Record (SCR) and authorised to attend site unaccompanied. Visitors without Enhanced DBS recorded on the SCR are accompanied at all times by a member of staff. All visitors are required to wear visitor lanyards; those who are authorised to attend site unaccompanied, are provided with 'green' visitor's lanyards and those who must be accompanied, are provided with 'red' visitor lanyards. This enables staff and students to clearly identify which visitors can be unaccompanied and those that must be accompanied.

Use of school premises for non-school activities

When we have arranged a extra-curricular activities out of school hours which is are direct supervision or management by school staff, this safeguarding policy is to be followed and any concerns should be managed in accordance with [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#) and [Designated Safeguarding Lead Response](#).

We will follow our [Ensuring safe staff](#) procedures if we become aware of any allegations relating to an organisation or individual using our school premises.

Where we have sessions or activities which are provided by another person or organisation that is using the school site and not during school time or under direct supervision, we seek assurances that they have the required child safeguarding arrangements in place as an individual/organisation as outlined in [Keeping children safe during community activities](#). This is regardless of whether children who are on roll at our school access the activity or not.

The arrangements for this will be set out within any transfer of control agreement, (i.e. lease or hire agreement); and failure to comply with these arrangements will lead to termination of the agreement.

Alternative Provision

Where we place a child with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for their safety and welfare and should be satisfied that the provider can meet the needs of the pupil. The cohort of students accessing alternative provision often have complex needs. It is important that the Governing Body are aware of the additional risk of harm that their students may be vulnerable to. The Department for Education has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard: [Alternative Provision](#) and [DfE Statutory Guidance Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

Oldbury Wells School ensures that any alternative provision used for students is quality assured. The Alternative provision checklist (see Appendix A) is used to evidence that safeguarding procedures are being followed and the necessary vetting checks for staff at the alternative provision have been undertaken. If the provision is unregulated, (any provision that does not have a Unique Reference Number (URN) meaning it is registered with DfE having passed the regulatory tests including a site inspection by Ofsted to secure registered status) the Trust will hold a panel meeting to quality assure the paperwork completed by the school to ensure checks meet the required safeguarding standards. Placements will only be for 12 weeks in the first instance and will be reviewed by the panel for after this period. A pupil will not attend the placement for more than 14 hours per week. Any placement at alternative provision has the aim of securing successful engagement at school.

Ensuring Safe Staff

Managing allegations (including low level concerns)

We promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about the behaviour or conduct of any adults working in, at or on behalf the school are dealt with appropriately.

There are two levels of allegations / concerns:

1. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold.

Circumstances where a someone working within the school has or may have:

- behaved in a way that have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they would pose a risk of harm to children; or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes any behaviour that may have occurred outside of the school that could pose a transferable risk.

Allegations that someone that working in, at or on behalf the school has met the harm threshold should be immediately referred to the Headteacher in person. Staff may be required to provide a written statement at the request of the Headteacher.

If the allegation relates to the Headteacher; this should be immediately verbally reported to the Trust Executive / CEO (01746 760509), or Chair of Governors, who will then immediately liaise with the Trust Executive / CEO.

If there is any conflict of interest or immediate risk of harm to a child or; then the person with the concern must ensure [Immediate safety](#) and contact the Local Authority Designated Officer in accordance with [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Managing Allegations Procedures](#).

In most cases; the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors if applicable) will lead on managing allegations; with the support of the Human Resources Department and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will ensure that Part 4 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Managing Allegations Procedures](#) are applied. Any allegations that meet the above criteria will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer within 1 working day and we will follow their advice and guidance.

We will notify OFSTED as soon as reasonably practical and within 14 days of the allegation first being made, informing them of action taken by completing the online form - [Report-a-serious-childcare-incident](#).

It is essential that any allegations of abuse against a member of staff are dealt with quickly, in a fairly and consistent way to effectively safeguard all those involved.

We also have a duty of care towards our staff, and we will provide a named contact for the staff member.

If necessary, we will adhere to our legal reporting duties (such as referring to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Teaching Regulation Agency) as employers as outlined in Part 3 Keeping Children Safe in Education if the criteria for such reporting is met.

2. Allegations / concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (Low level concerns).

The term low level does not mean that these concerns are insignificant. A low-level concern is when staff or volunteer may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Our staff code of conduct outlines examples of what could be considered a low-level concern;
- Does not meet the harm threshold at point 1 above.
-

Low level concerns should be reported in person to the DSL; to embed our culture of openness and transparency. To ensure that our school's values and expected behaviours are lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff.

The DSL will gather as much information as possible and notify the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will decide the outcome of all low-level concerns (in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if necessary) raised. Consideration will be given to whether there is a pattern of behaviour by the individual; or if there is a wider school culture issue and if policies need to be revised, or if all staff guidance or additional staff training is required.

Whistle Blowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can raise concerns in good faith without fear of repercussions. All staff have a duty to raise concerns where they exist about another staff or volunteers practice. This may include attitude or actions of colleague's poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in adhering to the schools' policies, procedures and staff code of conduct.

If staff have such concerns; these should be raised to DSL or Headteacher.

If staff feel unable to raise concerns with the school directly; they can contact [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](#).

Record Keeping and Information Security

When a concern about a child's welfare or safety is raised it will be discussed with the DSL and recorded. The DSL will make a decision about whether the concern should be shared with another agency or kept on record in case future concerns arise. The reason for the decision will be noted alongside the record.

Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

All records will be stored on CPOMS or in a separate confidential file in a locked, secure place with restricted access.

Where children leave the school (including in-year transfers) the DSL will ensure their CPOMS file (and any relevant paperwork) is transferred to the new school within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. When a student transfers to another school within this or another authority, the confidential information held is forwarded under confidential cover to the DSL in the receiving school immediately. This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained (Appendix E).

In addition to the CPOMS file, the DSL will consider sharing additional information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. This would be for the purpose of helping the new school put in place the right support to safeguard the child and to help them thrive.

Where children have a Social Worker, Local Authorities will share this information with the school. The DSL will hold and use this information, so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all form of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. We follow the guidance in the HM Government 2018 guide ['Information sharing: advice for practitioners](#)

[providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#)' and the Department for Education 2015 guide ['What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'](#).

Staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging or where a child is already known to the Local Authority Children's Social Care. The Governing Body is aware that, among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. When sharing information the school adheres to Data Protection and GDPR regulations, as per the school GDPR Policy.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or a Deputy. Concerns about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

When information is being accumulated prior to possible referral, we will start a chronology of events using CPOMS. Some chronologies will need to be produced for a specific reason, for example, when a new relationship is started, during multi-agency meetings, from the start of a significant event or from the start of the date parameters set by a statutory case review. The chronology will then continue throughout the intervention or for as long as is required.

The DSL will regularly review all child protection chronologies to decide if the accumulation of events is having a detrimental impact on a child and must be referred to Children's Services. If the DSL decides not to refer, the reason will be noted on the child's chronology.

Working in Partnership

As is outlined in our safeguarding statement; and in order to ensure all children in our school are effectively safeguarded and their welfare is promoted; we will work in partnership with our children, their parents and other agencies/partnerships as follows:

Children

Our children are taught how to keep safe; including how and when to share or report to us any worries or concerns they may have about their safety and wellbeing or that of others. We encourage children to share and report worries and concerns by:

- Reporting through online
- Speaking to a trusted member of staff
- Speaking to the pastoral team
- Reporting directly to the DSL

Staff are expected to build trusted relationships with and work in the best interests of children in line with our Safeguarding Statement; and recognise, respond and report staff safeguarding concerns.

We also actively seek children's views of safety in school through anonymous on-line surveys.

Parents

We recognise the importance of working together with and supporting parents to safeguard and promote the welfare of their children. This includes:

- Communicating to parents how we keep children safe in our school (including online). This policy is made available to all prior to their child joining Oldbury Wells School, as well as details of the complaints procedure. In general, any concerns will be discussed with parents and we will offer support.
- If parents want to raise concerns or complaints about how we keep their children safe; they can do this using our Complaints Policy which is available on our website. We also actively seek parent views of safety in school through on-line feedback.
- Encouraging parents to share and report worries and concerns about the safety and welfare of their child(ren) or any other children.
- Staff are expected to respond to any parents who raises worries or concerns to them either about their child(ren) or others in line with [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#) .
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that we work with parents to offer and enable support for children and their families; taking action to safeguard and promote their welfare in line with the local arrangements in the area that they live.
- Ensuring that parents are made aware of how to raise safeguarding concerns or criminal behaviour themselves to the Local Authority and/or Enforcement Agencies.
- Providing parents with regular information, guidance and external support available to them via the school website.

Other Agencies/Partnerships

As we operate in Shropshire; we engage and co-operate with our local safeguarding arrangements. Our local safeguarding partnership is the [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership \(SSCP\)](#). We engage and co-operate by:

- Ensuring we effectively safeguard and promote the welfare of children living in Shropshire in line with [Working together to safeguard children](#) and the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership local criteria for action and assessment; as outlined in the [SSCP Threshold Document](#). Where children do not live in Shropshire but attend our school; we will work in line with the relevant local arrangements in their home area.
- Ensuring we work with other agencies and comply with other pieces of relevant statutory guidance in safeguarding [Children potentially at greater risk of harm](#).
- Supplying information and co-operating in multi-agency forum/meetings, audit or learning reviews as requested by the safeguarding partners.
- Working closely with Shropshire Council Learning and Skills Services and other Shropshire Council Services/partnerships to ensure we are providing high quality education and support to children in Shropshire.
- Participating in the local [Operation Encompass Protocol](#); an arrangement where police notify schools when a child who attends their school may have been subject or witness to police-attended incidents of domestic abuse. This enables us to provide appropriate emotional or practical support to a child/ren who may have been witness to and victim of domestic abuse.

Teaching our children how to keep safe

We recognise that educating our children in how to keep themselves and others safe both online and in face-to-face situation plays a crucial role in safeguarding them. We have a clear set of values and standards that provide opportunities for children to learn how to keep themselves and others safe; that are demonstrated and reinforced throughout school life and underpinned through:

- Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy (Insert link)
- Preventing radicalisation
- Our approach to on-line safety
- Our Personal Social Health and Education and Computing curriculum and policies including our RHE /RSHE Policy. Our RSHE programme is developed to be fully inclusive of all ages and stages of development and consideration of children's needs including children potentially at greater risk of harm; and addresses issues as outlined Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024;
- The DSL, PSHE Lead and other key members of the Senior Leadership Team (such as computing, Mental Health and SENDCo) will work collaboratively to ensure that this is implemented; and being responsive to any safeguarding themes or patterns of concern that arise in school.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. At Oldbury Wells School, we ensure that there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

We have an effective whole school approach to online safety which empowers us as a school, to protect and educate students/staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, (e.g. pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism).
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; (e.g. peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes)
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying); and
- **Commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group(<https://apwg.org/>).
- **Training** – The Governing Body should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and

considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, the school will follow advice from the Department of Education; Safeguarding and Remote Education. [Safeguarding and remote education](#).

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices such as computers, tablets, and game devices is commonplace. However, as a society, we are beginning to recognise that although these devices have brought great benefit, we also need to ensure that we help children to understand there are dangers and how to keep themselves safe. This includes:

- Keeping personal details secure
- Understanding that not all content is appropriate, truthful or legal. What to do if they do accidentally access inappropriate or illegal content
- What to do if they are upset by something they receive
- What to do if they are going to physically meet someone they have met on-line

Students in Years 7 to 11 should not use their mobile phones on the school site.

Teaching staff are able to use their personal mobile phones (and smart watches) during their break times in designated areas. During working hours, they must be kept out of the reach of children and parents in a secure area accessible only to staff. All staff are made aware of their duty to follow this procedure, and to challenge anyone not adhering to it. Visitors are asked to refrain from mobile phone use at school.

Very occasionally, and with the Headteacher's permission, important contact details of the children are kept on a mobile phone, for example: when students with medical needs are taken out of school on trips.

We believe that photographs validate children's experiences and achievements and are a valuable way of recording milestones in a child's life. Parental permission for the different ways in which we use photographs is gained as part of the initial registration at Oldbury Wells School. We take a mixture of photos that reflect the school environment, sometimes this will be when children are engrossed in an activity either on their own or with their peers. In order to safeguard children and adults and to maintain privacy, cameras are not to be used during intimate care situations.

The ICT systems at Oldbury Wells School have anti-virus software and students are taught how to be 'safe online' as part of ICT lessons and in assemblies.

Through induction, staff and volunteers are made aware of our 'acceptable use of technology' policy both at home and in the workplace. If any staff or volunteers breach this policy then we will take disciplinary action which may result in a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Where there are online safety concerns involving identified children (including child-on-child abuse); we will follow [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#) and [Designated Safeguarding Lead Safeguarding Response](#).

Any school cyber security incidents will be reported to [Action Fraud \(National Fraud and Cyber Crime Reporting Centre\)](#) and, if there is a data breach this will be reported in line with our Data Protection Processes to the [Information Commissioners Office](#). Please also see [Record Keeping and Information Security](#).

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, we follow advice from the Department of Education; [Safeguarding and remote education](#). Our approach to remote learning is outlined in our Remote Learning Policy.

We review our online safety arrangements annually to ensure that we meet the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, online safety standards (including the digital standards for [filtering and monitoring](#) and [cyber security](#)). Any risks arising from our reviews are clearly recorded as part of our school evaluation and improvement action planning processes. These are reported to and overseen by our Governing Body.

All Staff, senior leaders and Governors are appropriately trained (see [Professional Development and Supervision](#)) to enable them to ensure effective online safety arrangements. We will respond to online safety incidents which indicate safeguarding concerns in line with the [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#) and [Designated Safeguarding Lead Response](#) sections of this policy.

Preventing Radicalisation

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015) under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015; places a duty on schools and registered childcare providers to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The government set out its definition of British values– this promotes the values of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Oldbury Wells School promotes these values to ensure that children build resilience.

If a member of staff has a concern about a child they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the DSL, as set out in the Child Protection/safeguarding policy.

The DSL should refer to the [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Child Exploitation Practice Guidance and Protocol](#) (Preventing Terrorism).

Prevent referrals should be sent to ctu_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk

If uncertain about whether threshold is met for a Prevent referral, we would contact West Mercia Police on 01386 591821 for a consultation.

For assistance with completion of a Prevent referral form, we would contact the West Midlands Prevent Hub on 0121 251 0241.

Domestic abuse and honour-based abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It can take place between individuals aged 16 years and over who have a “personal connection” (as defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021).

So called “honour” based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage) may also be considered as domestic abuse.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

We will seek support for victims and their children by following:

- [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership Domestic Abuse Pathway](#).
- [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriageMulti-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Depending on the level of risk, we may or may not consult parents before contacting Children’s Services.

Oldbury Wells School takes part in Operation Encompass, which is being run locally in partnership with Shropshire Council and West Mercia Police.

Operation Encompass is a process whereby the police and the Shropshire Council will inform a member of staff if a child has experienced a domestic abuse incident. This will be done prior to the start of the day. Information sharing between professional agencies allows staff to provide emotional and practical support to their students experiencing domestic abuse.

The sharing of details under Operation Encompass is permitted under Statutory Safeguarding Legislation and in respect of Local Authority schools under the Crime and Disorder Act (for the prevention of crime) and doing so without the child’s or parent’s consent is permissible under both pieces of legislation and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

For more information on Operation Encompass, please visit:

<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or Deputy) about any concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, during their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must personally report this to the police.

All teachers will be aware of and adhere to the Government Guidance on [Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information](#)

For more information about FGM, please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet>

Parental consent may not be sought if this may put the girl at increased risk.

We fulfil our duty by:

- Promoting fundamental British Values as part of our values and curriculum
- Ensure that we provide a “safe space” for children to understand and discuss sensitive topics, those linked to terrorism and extremism, and learn (according to their age and level of development) how to question and challenge these ideas in a politically balanced way.

- Be alert to and identify children who may be susceptible to extremist ideology and where it is assessed as appropriate by the Designated Safeguarding Lead; make a Prevent referral (in line with the local Preventing Terrorism Processes)
- Monitor and report any hate based behaviour as part of our Behaviour and Child-on-Child Abuse Policies
- Outline in our Online Safety and Relationship Sex Health Education Policies how children are being safeguarded from being drawn into terrorism (including visiting speakers) (please also refer to Teaching our children how to keep safe.)
- Assess the risk of our children being drawn into terrorism, ensuring this is informed by the potential risk in the local area. Any identified risks are referenced in our school evaluation processes; and inform our approach to online safety (including filtering and monitoring and cyber security arrangements).

We regularly review our adherence to the Prevent Duty. Any actions arising from our assessment are included in our school evaluation and improvement action planning processes. These are reported to and overseen by our Governing Body.

All Staff, senior leaders and Governors are appropriately trained to enable them to ensure that all children, particularly those who may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation are effectively safeguarded. We respond to children who are identified as being susceptible to an extremist ideology in line with the [Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report](#) and [Designated Safeguarding Lead Response](#) sections of this policy.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

We recognise that whilst all children should be protected, some groups of children, are potentially at risk of greater harm than others (both online and offline). The list below is not exhaustive but highlights some of those groups. Where a child falls into multiple groups above; this potentially further increases their vulnerability.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and/or trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

At Oldbury Wells we work with other agencies including statutory safeguarding partners to support vulnerable children and the contact you have with social care and social workers. We support their work by: holding regular meetings in school, taking part in partnership forums/events and access multi-agency training. Oldbury Wells School also offers to facilitate meetings for individual children and families in school/setting to support easier local access and involvement by children, parents and or carers.

Looked After Children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect; as well as/or other significant complexities or adversity in their and their family's life.

At Oldbury Wells School, we ensure that appropriate staff members have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, contact and care arrangements. School/setting has an appointed designated teacher (Mrs Rebecca Lawson)

who works with the local authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after in line with Statutory guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect or child exploitation; as well as other needs. Our response to persistently absent pupils and children who are absent from education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

Unauthorised absence is followed up robustly in school. Contact is made with parents if a pupil is missing from school without a reason provided. Further instances of unauthorised absence will be followed up with contact home and involvement of the Local Authority Educational and Welfare Officer. We also conduct home visits if necessary.

We refer to and use Statutory Guidance on [Children missing education](#) to ensure we comply with our duties regarding children missing education. This includes notifying the Local Authority in line with the [Shropshire Council Children missing education](#) process when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points.

Children who are Electively Home Educated

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

If a parent wishes to electively home educate, they must notify the school of their intention to do so in writing. The school will then contact the Local Authority. If a parent/carer of a child with an Education, health and care plan expresses the intention to educate their child at home, the local authority will need to review the plan and work closely with parents.

Please see link to [Elective Home Education \(Shropshire Council\)](#)

Children requiring Mental Health Support

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Children who have mental health needs will often need early help or support to avoid their safety and welfare being compromised.

We have a senior mental health lead who is a member of the senior leadership team. All staff are made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator of abuse. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy, and speaking to the DSL or a Deputy. The [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance](#) sets out how schools and colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their students.

Trauma and Mental Health

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff should be aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their physical and mental health, behaviour, and education.

Children with Special Education Needs Disabilities or other health issues

It is recognised that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration; children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without necessarily showing outward signs; communication barriers; and/or cognitive understanding.

It is important, therefore, to be particularly sensitive to these issues when considering any aspect of the welfare and safety of such children, and to seek professional advice where necessary. We will consider extra pastoral support attention for children with SEND to ensure they are safeguarded.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

When supporting a gender questioning child, school will take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstance where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

At Oldbury Wells school students are taught about the Equality Act (2010) and protected characteristics as part of our PSHE and assembly programme. We have an LGBT support group for your people at lunch times.

Child-on-Child Abuse

As set out in our [Safeguarding Statement](#); we will not tolerate the abuse of children. This includes where children abuse other children (child-on-child abuse) or use words or actions which downplay or could (if not responded to) lead to abuse.

We want to ensure that no child-on-child abuse takes place in our school. However, we understand that we cannot just rely on children telling us that they are experiencing abuse from other children. Staff should understand that even if there are no reports in school, this does not mean child-on-child abuse is not happening. Staff will be made aware of the signs and indicators of child-on-child abuse as part of their [Professional Development and Supervision](#); which do not just rely upon children telling someone. Staff are expected to follow our [Appendix B: Child-on-Child Abuse Procedures](#)

The school monitors patterns of child-on-child incidents including those involving abuse, to ensure that we are aware of and able to minimise and respond to any emerging themes or

patterns of behaviours. This helps us to continue to prevent, identify and respond to child-on-child abuse as outlined at the beginning of this section. This monitoring and our responses to it are reported to and overseen by our Governing Body.

We ensure that staff at our school know that child-on-child abuse can take different forms, such as:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element.

The information below is taken from Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

We ensure that our school staff are aware that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

We ensure our staff understand the definitions of sexual violence and sexual harassment as set out in part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

Where there are concerns of child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment, the school will follow the Government guidance as set out in:

- Part 5 of KCSIE 2024: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/searching-screening-and-confiscation-at-school)

In summary, the process and procedures for managing a sexual violence or sexual harassment incident are:

Whole school approach

- Pre-planned risk assessment proforma in place
- Training for staff on how to report incidents
- Training on how to manage reports
- Child-on child policy in place

Responding to a report

- Victims are reassured, supported and kept safe
- Record the concern
- Inform the DSL if not involved in the initial report.

Risk Assessment

- Risk assessment for victim
- Risk assessment for alleged perpetrator
- Risk assessment for all other children involved (including any necessary support for siblings)
- Initial consideration of children sharing a classroom and/or having direct contact in school
- Initial consideration of contact between children travelling to and from school

Support

- Support for victim and alleged perpetrator

Managing the report

- Consider the options to manage the report, including manage internally, early help, referral to children's social care and report to police
- Consider bail conditions
- Manage delays in the criminal process

The school monitors whether there are any patterns of child-on-child abuse using CPOMS and will determine necessary support and intervention.

It is vital that staff at Oldbury Wells School understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be risk of harm. Staff should make every effort to ensure that the child who is perpetrating the abuse is also treated as a potential victim and undertake assessments to conclude this. Sensitive work must be undertaken with the child who is perpetrating, by helping them to understand the nature of their behaviour and the effect it has on others may prevent abuse as a whole. Staff must be able to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as "normal developmental childhood behaviour" becomes abusive, dangerous and harmful to others. DSLs may need to consult with the SSCP Threshold document to help with their decision making.

Children do not always feel able to speak out about their experience of child-on-child sexual abuse. They may be afraid of:

- Being considered a ‘snitch’
- Getting in trouble themselves
- How they will be perceived by others
- Teachers or adults not being discrete
- Their parents being informed.

A helpline was launched by the NSPCC on 01/04/2021 to support potential victims of sexual harassment and abuse. Run by the NSPCC, it aims to provide advice and support to both children and adults who are victims of abuse in school. It will also include how to contact the police to report crimes. The advice line is also available to support professionals and parents. NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663.

This dedicated helpline will offer support to:

- All children making current and non-recent disclosures of abuse
- Any children who want to talk about being involved or witnessing any incidents
- Any adults who have experienced non-recent abuse
- Parents and carers who have any concerns about their own or other children
- Parents and carers who have any concerns about their own or other children
- Professionals who work in schools and need support on this or related issues.

This school promote the use of this helpline through:

- Posters around the school
- School assemblies and staff meetings
- Newsletters to parents
- The school website
- Social media

Staff Safeguarding Concerns: Recognise, Respond, Report

Recognise

Be alert and curious!

Pay attention to possible **signs or indicators** of abuse from the child or others either from your own observation or what the child/others tell you:

Appearance

Behaviour

Communication.

Do not just rely on a child telling you (there are lots of reasons why they won't)

Any child in any family could become a victim of [abuse](#). Abuse and safeguarding issues are complex; and can often involve a child experiencing multiple issues or types of abuse.

Staff should always maintain the attitude that abuse “could happen here”. Staff should be particularly alert to [Children potentially at greater risk of harm](#) and vigilant in identifying the signs and indicators which could indicate a concern that a child is being or could be at risk of abuse.

As well as maintaining their [Professional development and accessing support](#); staff can remind themselves of the signs and indicators of abuse and safeguarding issues by referring to: [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) Part 1 and Annex B. and [SSCP - Contacts and Definitions](#).

Signs and indicators of concern may be evident in spaces and places where children spend time (including when online). They may be present in the child or others around them (including adults or children); in their:

- Appearance
- Behaviour
- Communication

Signs and indicators can be recognised by staff through:

Concerns shared directly by a child: Staff *must not rely* on children telling them they are experiencing abuse. Children may not recognise; feel ready; know how to or be able to communicate concerns or worries. Staff must therefore act in accordance with our [Safeguarding Statement](#); [work in partnership](#) and use [professional curiosity](#) and skills in developing trusted and supportive relationships in their everyday work with children.

Observations: In person or online (including online behaviour in school) of a child or someone else (for example a parent, someone working or visiting the school).

Concerns shared by others: either verbally or in written communications. This could be parents; other children; other staff members or other adults who may be working in or with the school or individual children.

Other systems we have in place: For example, online filtering and monitoring or information from other agencies through [working in partnership](#) etc.

There will be occasions where there are signs and indicators of concern but not enough evidence to indicate that the child is at risk of or experiencing abuse. Signs and indicators could be present for a variety of reasons as well as abuse (for example other family circumstances; health or learning needs); and may act as an early sign for the need for early help and support. In such circumstances, staff are still expected to respond in line with this policy.

Respond

Ensure the immediate safety of the child potentially at risk. If there is **immediate danger**; take action as necessary to protect the child, others and yourself (including contacting emergency services on 999 and [refer child protection concerns](#))

Apply other relevant policies/procedures (e.g. behaviour; first aid; attendance, staff code of conduct and/or [Appendix B: Child-on-Child Abuse Procedures](#) as applicable).

Seek views/gather relevant information (if safe to do so).

Remember: Listen (don't investigate), reassure (don't promise) and explain you will be reporting the concerns.

Immediate safety

If a child is in **immediate danger**; staff must take individual action as necessary to keep the child, others, and themselves safe. They must:

- Contact emergency services if someone is in immediate danger (999).
- If necessary; refer child protection concerns themselves (follow [Multi-agency Referral: Reporting concerns \(MARF\)](#))
- Work in line with our Behaviour Policy and [Use of reasonable force in schools](#) guidance.
- Report any allegations of harm by adults in a position of trust or unsafe practices in school in line with the [Ensuring safe staff](#).

Other relevant policies/processes

Staff may need to follow other school safeguarding policies/processes as applicable along with responding in line with this policy. All staff will immediately consider how best to support and protect the child and any other children who may be at risk or involved; ensuring they act in their best interests. Where there are concerns of child-on-child abuse; [Appendix B: Child-on-Child Abuse Procedures](#) should be referred to.

Injuries

We request parents notify us of any accidents or injuries to their child before attending school. We will make a written record of the notification along with any injuries the child may have. Should a child receive any injuries during school time; staff will follow our accident reporting and first aid procedures. A body map may be used to indicate any marks/bruises ([Multi-agency referral form \(MARF\)](#)).

Seek views and gather information from the child and others.

Where safeguarding concerns are identified; staff should (where it is safe to do so) always seek the views of and directly from:

- Children (where appropriate and depending on the circumstances and their role with children);
- any other people involved in school (only on a need-to-inform/know basis for the purposes of gathering information for the purposes of safeguarding: see [Record Keeping and Information Security](#))
- Their parents (if necessary and depending on the circumstances and their role).

Any uncertainty about seeking views should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Seeking views from the child/parents means asking them what they think using open questions (What? How? etc) and if they want any help or support. Staff should listen, reassure, and explain that concerns will be reported. Staff should avoid making assumptions, judgments or investigating. Please also refer to [When concerns are directly shared by a child](#).

Views should always be sought unless it is not safe to do so. This includes where seeking views would:

- Place the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- Place any other at risk of injury.
- Obstruct or interfere with any potential Police investigation.
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about significant harm.

If needs for help and support are identified; parents and children should always be asked for their consent to share information with other organisations so that help and support can be provided to them. If consent is not given; staff should follow guidance in the [Recording Keeping and Information Security: Sharing safeguarding information with others](#) section.

Any uncertainty about seeking views should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Decisions to share safeguarding concerns with other organisations without consent will be [reported to](#) and overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a child is non-verbal or not able to explain their views themselves due to their age, level of development or needs; then staff should pay attention to how the child may be expressing their views and feelings through their behaviour and use communication tools to help the child share their views.

When concerns are directly shared by a child

Children are more likely to share their experiences and feelings with someone they know and feel comfortable talking to.

When children share the details of or feelings about abuse; the process of sharing can sometimes take time. Children may not share in full or give staff (and sometimes not the same staff member) pieces of information over time. When they do share, this may not always be verbally or directly; but the child may share in the Appearance, Behaviour or other forms of communication (see [Recognise](#) section).

It takes a lot of courage for a child to share that they feel unsafe or are experiencing abuse. There are many reasons why children do not share their experiences (for example, uncertainty, shame, experiences of discrimination, fear, denial or a lack of understanding or ability to recognise and explain their experience).

When children are sharing their concerns; staff should:

- **Listen to the child.** Please refer to this [NSPCC poster](#).
- **Remain calm:** the child may stop sharing if they feel the staff member is upset or shocked by what the child is telling them.
- **Explain it can't be a secret.** Staff must explain to the child that what they share has to be passed on and to who so that you can help them. Think about when to do this to make sure the child feels safe and can continue to trust you and other staff.

- **Reassure** and offer comfort to the child (physical touch should not be automatically offered as comfort); recognise their feelings and their courage in sharing their experience. Never deny or minimise what the child is telling you or reprimand them if they decide not to share or for not telling you before.
- **Seek the child's views**: use questions or communication tools that help the child to share from their own point of view. Gather information: do not investigate or assume what is happening to the child.
- **Explain** what will happen next. If you don't know everything that is going to be done, tell the child that you will make sure that they are kept informed.
- **Report and record** the conversation immediately as outlined in the [Reporting concerns](#) section.
- **Seek support** if you feel distressed. Speak to your line manager or Rebecca Lawson DSL.

Report

Report in person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

Record your concerns, decisions, actions and outcomes on the CPOMS.

If concerned about a member of staff or someone else in the school; report to the Headteacher.

Report to Designated Safeguarding Lead

All safeguarding concerns must be Reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as they are recognised and after the initial response to the child and others. Staff are expected to verbally report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where concerns involve an allegation of harm or a low-level concern about someone working in or at the school; staff must follow [Ensuring safe staff](#).

Record concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded by the staff member in writing. Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

All records will be stored on CPOMS or in a separate confidential file in a locked, secure place with restricted access.

Where physical injuries to a child form part of the evidence of the concern; staff will record information about the physical injuries observed on a Body Map.

If staff are unsure of the recording requirements staff should seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Designated Safeguarding Lead Response

Safeguarding concerns can be [raised by staff](#) as above; but may also be raised to the Designated Safeguarding Lead by:

- Children, parents, or visitors to the school.
- Other agencies (see [Working in Partnership](#))
- The school's ICT filtering and monitoring systems.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

Consider and assess the concern

Review the information reported; gather any further information as necessary; including conducting a risk and needs assessment if necessary. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will use and refer to the following:

- [Keeping children safe in education 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [SSCP Threshold Document](#)
- Other [relevant local tools and pathways](#) (West Midlands Procedures)
- If applicable [Appendix B: Child-on-Child Abuse Procedures](#)
- [When to Call the Police Guidance for Schools](#)

Decide on what action to take

Once the concern has been considered and assessed; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on action(s) to be taken. They may wish to delegate actions to other members of staff; in the best interests of the child. The DSL will assist the Headteacher with decisions to [Ensuring safe staff](#) in school.

In making decisions; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work in partnership with the Headteacher; relevant staff/senior leadership team in line with their [Roles and Responsibilities](#) and any other organisations as appropriate (see [Working in Partnership](#) and [Record Keeping and Information Security](#)).

Actions could include one or more of the below:

- **Manage internally.** In alignment with school policies and processes including offering support to the child and their family through the school pastoral support (Universal/School Early Help) offer in a way which addresses the needs/risks identified. This may also include actions to make locations/infrastructure in school (including online) safer; adapt the curriculum to ensure we are [Teaching our children how to keep safe](#) or [Working in Partnership](#).
- **Offer Early Help/Targeted Early Help.** This could include offering and/or referring the child or their family enhanced or specialist support services to address the needs/risks identified in line with the [SSCP Thresholds document](#) and locally available provision. Any referrals for support will require parental consent and will take account of children's wishes and feelings.
- **Raise concerns to Children's Social Care** in line with the [SSCP Thresholds document](#) and [relevant local tools and pathways](#).
- **Report to the Police.** If there are any concerns that a crime (including online) may have been committed by someone against or involving a child; concerns will be reported to the Police.

Where there is possible criminal behaviour by a child (including in circumstances of child-on-child abuse); we will take account of [When to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges](#).

Other local referral processes will also be followed as applicable: including referring to relevant multi-agency forums and processes as outlined in [relevant local tools and pathways](#) (e.g. to [Prevent Radicalisation](#), ensure [Online Safety](#), respond to domestic abuse: [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference](#)).

Record actions, decisions, and outcomes

On the child protection file and in line with [Record Keeping and Information Security](#). This will include assessments and discussions (including meeting notes/minutes) of discussions and meetings with staff or others (see [Working in Partnership](#)).

Manage and oversee any ongoing response

Once the initial actions are taken; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide whether there is an ongoing need to actively monitor or manage the safeguarding needs of a child. Where this is decided; they will ensure that the school works in partnership with the child; parents, and any other involved agencies. This may include taking further actions (as outlined above) where concerns escalate.

The [SSCP Escalation/Resolution of Professional Disagreements Policy](#) will be used to challenge, resolve and if necessary escalate any concerns the school may have when working with other agencies in safeguarding children.

Please note: Appendices can be viewed upon request.